



www.epa.gov/OWOW/heritage/rivers.html

The American Heritage Rivers Initiative program was announced by the White House in 1998 as a new program to help communities restore and revitalize waters and waterfronts. Americans will look more in the future to our rivers as a source for improving community life. This initiative will integrate the economic, environmental and historic preservation programs and services of federal agencies to benefit communities in efforts to protect their rivers.

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Connecticut River



Photo: Steve Delany, US EPA

What Makes the Connecticut River Watershed Special?

- Watershed encompasses roughly two-thirds of New England. The river is 410 miles long and is the source of 70% of Long Island Sound's fresh water.
- Land uses: commerce, agriculture and industry, with 80% of the watershed being forested and 11% of the watershed in agricultural use.
- Ninety-nine cities and towns border the Connecticut River, including Springfield, MA and Hartford, CT.
- Watershed contains one of the least disturbed tidal marsh systems in the nation and is a key habitat for a wide variety of birds and wildlife.

Why Was The CT River Selected for the American Heritage River Initiative (AHRI)?

- Nominating communities demonstrated an existing framework to adopt the goals of AHRI. The nomination also received enormous support from over 250 communities and institutions as well as strong state support.
- One of 124 nominations nationally solicited and one of the 14 rivers ultimately selected by President Clinton.

What is the Long Term Goal?

- To support community-based efforts to restore and protect the environmental, economic, cultural and historic values of the Connecticut River.

Progress/Goals for the Future

What Partnership Progress Has Been Made?

- EPA hired the full-time "Navigator" position, Dan Burke. Navigator's role is to help communities identify federal programs and resources to help carry out action plans for the river.
- In July 1999, an agreement was signed establishing a framework for and demonstrating the commitment of federal, state and local partners.
- EPA funded a watershed outreach and education project, CT water quality monitoring, restoration of fish passage in CT, nonpoint source/stormwater management projects in Hartford, CT area and in 1999 funded \$50,000 for sustainable riverbanks and \$31,000 for livable communities and smart growth.

What EPA Actions are Planned for 2000?

- **CSO's:** Work with Interstate CT River Coalition to develop a pilot program for CSO control using watershed-based source reduction controls for stormwater.
- **Sustainable Riverbanks:** Inventory erosion sites, restore worst sites and establish conservation easements on riverfront properties.
- **Energy and Recreation:** Participate in relicensing efforts by 2001 of hydroelectric dams on the river.
- **Hartford Urban Riverfront Revitalization:** Assist in streamlining the permitting process where possible.
- **Communications:** Contribute to creation of a CT River website.
- **Issue Report Card:** Provide assistance for an annual CT River report card.

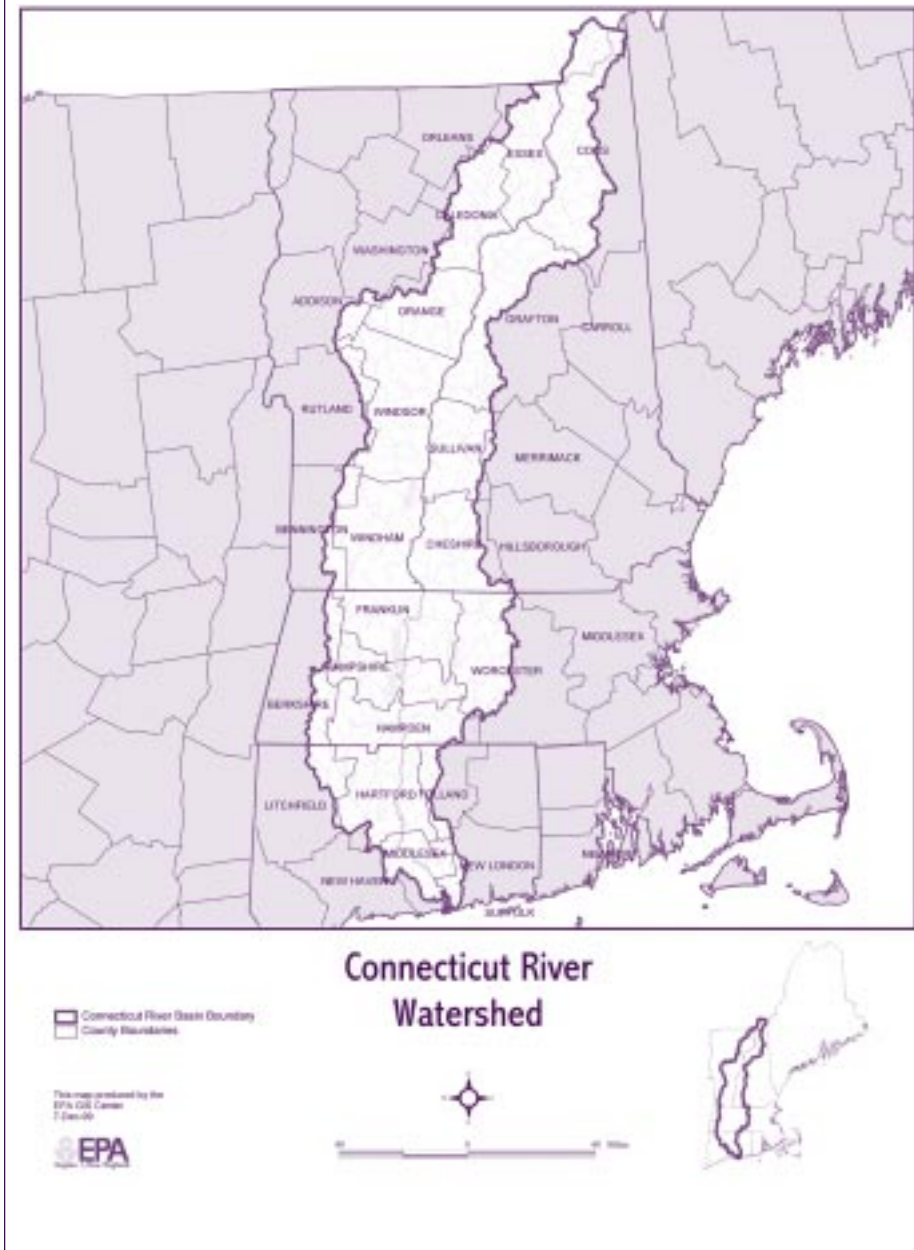
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Who Are The Partners?

Capitol Region Council of Governments • Pioneer Valley Planning Commission • Connecticut River Conservation District Coalition • Riverfront Recapture, Inc. • Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency • Science Center of Connecticut • Connecticut River Watershed Council, Inc. • East Windsor AHRI Committee, Town of East Windsor CT • Midstate Regional Planning Agency • Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce • New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission • Franklin Regional Council of Government • Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission • Southwest Region Planning Commission • Windham Regional Commission • Brattleboro Selectboard • Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission • Connecticut River Joint Commissions, Inc. • Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission • Northeast Vermont Development Association • US Fish and Wildlife • US Environmental Protection Agency • US Army Corps of Engineers • Federal Highway Administration • Housing and Urban Development • Economic Development Agency, Dept. of Commerce • US Geological Survey • Federal Emergency Management Agency • National Marine Fisheries Service • National Park Service • Univ. of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension • Univ. of Connecticut Cooperative Extension • USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service • USDA Forest Service • USDA - Rural Development for states of CT, MA, RI, NH and VT • USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for the states of CT, MA, NH, VT • USDA Farm Service Agency for the states of CT, MA, NH and VT • Governors of CT, MA, NH and VT



What is the American Heritage River Initiative?

- Offers special recognition to outstanding stretches of America's rivers.
- Designated rivers receive federal assistance for up to five years in the form of refocused programs, grants, and technical assistance from existing federal resources.
- Rivers demonstrate cultural, historic, economic and environmental significance with strong grassroots support.



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Note: EPA-New England offers businesses and municipalities information and assistance to improve compliance with environmental laws and be better stewards of their local environment. Please call to learn how EPA can help.